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## **INDOT CISTMS**

The acronym stands for Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study (CISTMS), but knowing that doesn't really tell you much about this 18-month Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) initiative. "Its basic goal is to improve suburban mobility throughout Central Indiana," explains John Myers, PE, AICP of Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., the transportation engineering firm serving as consultants to the Indiana Department of Transportation on the study. "That's a very specific job, and a big one" he notes, "but it's also just a small piece of the on-going refinement process INDOT has initiated for its recently completed Long Range Plan."

To understand this relationship, and the statewide significance of CISTMS, a little background on the Long Range Plan is needed. As previously reported in *teMPO* (Special Edition/Winter, 2001), Indiana now has a project-specific statewide Long Range Plan, thanks to three-years of effort from the Indiana Department of Transportation and its various planning partners, including the state's twelve Metropolitan Planning Organizations, or MPOs. (NOTE: A thirteenth MPO is now being formed in the Columbus area, where the resident population has recently exceeded 50,000 – the federally mandated threshold requiring an urban area to have its own regional transportation planning function.) The INDOT 2000-2025 Long Range Plan lays out a strategy for the future of the state highway system, which is intended to provide Hoosiers with the highest level of mobility and safety possible, and to meet the needs of economic development and quality-of-life for the next quarter century. The new Long Range Plan extends the planning horizon to 2025 and provides INDOT and its planning partners with a long range view of how the state jurisdictional highway system will develop in the future.

Steve Smith, Manager of the INDOT Long Range Transportation Planning Section and Project Manager for CISTMS notes that the purpose of the study is to refine the INDOT Long Range Plan recommendations in Central Indiana. The focus is currently on the transportation needs of the suburban communities which have grown up on the fringe of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Area. Previously, the travel demand assessment focused upon radial trip-making to the Indianapolis urban core. However, as urban growth has continued, a decentralized pattern of trip-making has emerged. Travel needs between suburban communities have increased rapidly and are now stressing the existing state highway system. The CISTMS will provide a detailed analysis of the transportation needs for these suburban areas and a series of recommendations on how to improve the overall transportation system in Central Indiana.

## **CISTMS Objectives**

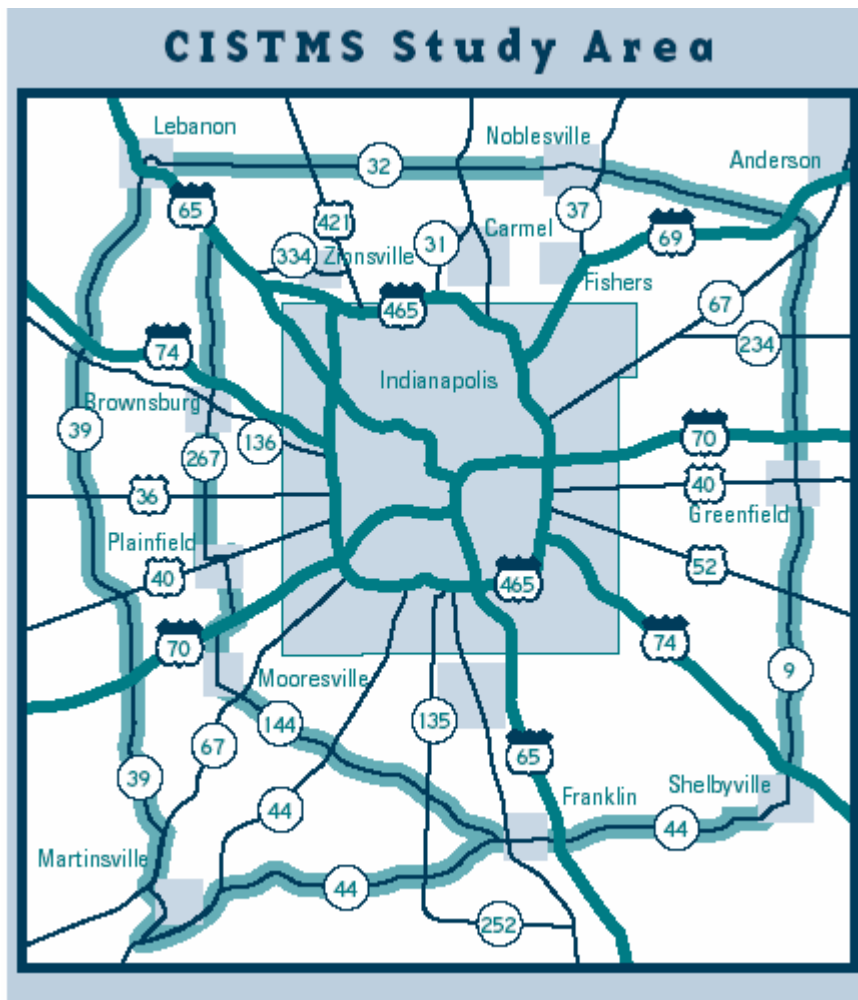
"When we were conducting the *connections* study of Northeast Corridor Transportation, people at our public meetings often suggested an 'outer beltway' to reduce I-465 congestion and to increase suburban mobility," remembers Mike Peoni, MPO Acting Manager. "We even put a limited Beltway Study in our 2001 Unified Planning Work Program, in part, in response to all of the public interest," he says, "but INDOT suggested a more comprehensive study in partnership with the Indianapolis and Anderson MPO's. That approach makes sense, because the CISTMS study area is larger than the MPO study area," Peoni reasons. "INDOT can facilitate the coordination between two MPO areas and they can apply their extensive resources in the areas that make the most sense." Those objectives include:

1. To identify the key issues and problems pertaining to suburban mobility in the 9-county area (Marion, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks and Boone) and determine how those can best be addressed from a planning and policy perspective. This study will concentrate on the area from I-465 outward to the 9-county boundary, but will also consider impacts

and benefits to the urban core. The travel forecast model will be used to develop and evaluate alternatives, focusing primarily on the SR 267, SR32, SR 9 and SR 44 corridors.

- Due to the large size of the study area, this project will be developed generally as four corridor studies at a regional planning level, meaning that the corridors will be evaluated based on their independent utility and localized needs, but also for their significance to regional and state transportation.
- CISTMS will identify specific opportunities and problem areas along the four corridors (SR 267, SR 32, SR 9 and SR 44) and appropriate parallel facilities, including radial routes (emanating from downtown Indianapolis outward) and connections, and recommend the most feasible strategies for future consideration and engineering assessment. Examples of specific areas to be addressed could include SR 32, SR 267 and other facilities that may connect with interstate interchanges and/or major state routes.

## **CISTMS Study Area**



- CISTMS will provide recommendations for conceptual options that can be examined in future INDOT engineering studies.

- CISTMS should also address the adequacy of the state highway system in Central Indiana, answering the question, “Are there routes that should be relinquished to local jurisdictions (just as Binford Boulevard was relinquished to the City of Indianapolis) or new routes that should be added to the system?”

2. To examine I-69 traffic and:

- In the context of the options evaluation process, examine the potential transportation impacts of implementing feasible options for I-69.
- Make suggestions/recommendations regarding options for further detailed analysis in a separate study.
- Determine localized impacts on specific communities or local transportation facilities.
- Examine the impact of the Statewide Mobility Corridor proposed to the east of State Road 9 (see map), answering the question, “Will this proposed corridor divert sufficient traffic from Indianapolis to address traffic problems on I-465 and I-69 on the east side of Indianapolis?”

3. To maximize highway system efficiency:

- CISTMS will examine the interrelationship of land use and transportation decisions, the role of public transit, and the appropriate hierarchy of key transportation corridors within the 9-county area.
- An evaluation of access control, travel demand management Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) features (if applicable) and other programs to increase system efficiency will be included in the study.
- This study will also assess the regional impact of improved access systems, including an outer beltway, on the local and regional transportation system and on development patterns.

4. To conduct a ‘peer city’ analysis that will look at how other cities have addressed similar suburban mobility issues and, if possible, will detail the impacts of those decisions on development patterns. Criteria for the selection of peer cities is currently in development. In all likelihood, however, some will share general location, size or transportation system characteristics with Indianapolis, such as Columbus and Cincinnati, OH, and Louisville, while others may be studied only for their past mobility initiatives, such as Boston, Atlanta and Rochester, NY.

5. To ensure meaningful public involvement by:

- Developing a public involvement program that includes a newsletter, public meetings and tie-ins to INDOT’s web site ([www.IN.gov/dot](http://www.IN.gov/dot)).
- Involving diverse interests such as the business and economic development community and low-income groups, as well as those traditionally involved in the transportation planning process.
- Coordinating with local, elected officials.
- Attending local agency meetings dealing with CISTMS issues.

“We’re still in the early stages of CISTMS and the study’s time line and tasks (see Project Schedule) are still being refined,” says Lori Miser, the Parsons Brinckerhoff Project Manager for CISTMS. “But we know our overall goal of improving Central Indiana suburban mobility, and we know the study’s projected completion date of December, 2003. So, we have a lot of ground to cover before then.”

For more information on the Central Indiana Suburban Transportation and Mobility Study, contact Steve Smith, INDOT’s Project Manager, at 232-5646 ([ssmith@indot.state.in.us](mailto:ssmith@indot.state.in.us)), or Lori Miser at 317/972-1706 ([Miser@pbworld.com](mailto:Miser@pbworld.com)).

## **INDOT CISTMS Project Schedule**

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